

Ottawa:
The Literary Capital of Canada In the Nineteenth Century

- 1857 Queen Victoria designates Ottawa the permanent capital of Canada.
- 1859 Competition to design the Parliament Buildings announced in May. Construction begins in December.
- 1860 Rev. Aeneas McDonnell Dawson publishes the first book at Ottawa, *The Temporal Sovereignty of the Pope in relation to the State of Italy, A Lecture Delivered in St. Andrew's Catholic Church, Ottawa, With Additional Facts and Observations*.
- 1865 The civil service moves to Ottawa from Quebec City. Among this group are many young writers influenced by l'Abbé Henri-Raymond Casgrain and the "Mouvement littéraire" including Benjamin Sulte, Antoine Gérin-Lajoie, Joseph-Charles Taché, and Emmanuel Blain de St. Aubin.
- 1867 At Montreal, Thomas D'Arcy McGee delivers his influential cultural address, "The Mental Outfit of the New Dominion." In the address he describes the ideal capital city, in which urban monuments are complemented by literary and cultural accomplishments. With the help of McGee and Rev. Dawson, Henry J. Morgan publishes *Bibliotheca Canadensis* at Ottawa, the first comprehensive record of Canada's print heritage.
- 1868 A meeting of the Ottawa Mechanics' Institute in February, chaired by Sir John A. Macdonald, includes an address by Adams George Archibald, the Secretary of State for the Provinces, in which he envisions Ottawa as a literary-cultural centre. Archibald's address is reprinted in the city's English and French newspapers. In April, McGee is assassinated on Sparks Street. Followers of McGee establish the Canada First movement at H.J. Morgan's quarters on Rideau Street. Founding member Charles Mair publishes *Dreamland and Other Poems* at Ottawa. The Macdonald government provides the poet Charles Sangster with a position in the civil service.
- 1870 The short-lived Ottawa Literary Club is founded. Members include all the major literary figures in the capital, including Morgan, Sangster, Dawson, John G. Bourinot, and Sulte. At Ottawa, Sulte publishes his first book of poetry, *Les Laurentiennes*.
- 1872 In February, Joseph Howe, now the Secretary of State for the Provinces, delivers an address at Ottawa in which he echoes Archibald's call for a literary centre at the capital. A few days later, Macdonald delivers an address at Ottawa in which he proudly describes his contribution to the civil service, including the hiring of "men of high literary culture and poets."
- 1873 The poet Alfred Garneau is appointed as a translator in the Senate.

- 1874 The poet Louis-Honoré Fréchette is elected to Parliament as a member for Lévis. Howe's Ottawa address is published posthumously in the volume *Poems and Essays*.
- 1876 The Library of Parliament opens officially in February.
- 1877 The writer Achille Fréchette, brother of Louis-Honoré, joins the civil service. In the 1890s, Achille would help found *Le Cercle des Dix*, Ottawa's foremost francophone literary group.
- 1879 Duncan Campbell Scott enters the Department of Indian Affairs.
- 1882 At Ottawa, Governor General Lord Lorne presides over the founding of the Royal Society of Canada. The nation's major literary-cultural figures are inducted as members, including Ottawa representatives J.G. Bourinot (now Clerk of the House of Commons), Rev. Dawson, Sangster, Sulte, Joseph Tassé (MP for Ottawa), and l'Abbé Cyprien Tanguay. Other major figures represented are L.H. Fréchette, l'Abbé Casgrain, Pierre-Joseph-Olivier Chauveau and William Kirby. Katherine Barry publishes the first novel set in Ottawa, *Honor Edgeworth, or Ottawa's Present Tense*.
- 1883 The poet Archibald Lampman joins the civil service.
- 1884 At Ottawa, Nicholas Flood Davin publishes *Eos:—A Prairie Dream And Other Poems*, later revised and published at Regina as *Eos: An Epic of the Dawn and Other Poems* (1889).
- 1886 Davin is elected to Parliament as the Member for Assiniboia. Writer Susan Frances Harrison publishes her first book, *Crowded Out and Other Sketches*, at Ottawa.
- 1888 Lampman's first book, *Among the Millet and Other Poems* is published at Ottawa.
- 1891 Encouraged by the Macdonald government, the poet William Wilfred Campbell joins the civil service.
- 1892 For over a year, Lampman, Campbell and Scott write *At the Mermaid Inn*, a literary-cultural column published in the Toronto Globe.
- 1893 Scott publishes his first volume of poetry, *The Magic House and Other Poems*. Campbell publishes *The Dread Voyage and Other Poems*. At the meeting of the Royal Society of Canada, the Society's president, J.G. Bourinot, delivers an address entitled "Our Intellectual Strength and Weakness," which revives the cultural ideals of McGee's "The Mental Outfit of the New Dominion."
- 1895 Lampman is inducted into the Royal Society. The Society hosts a public literary reading that features Lampman, Scott, Campbell, S.F. Harrison, Pauline Johnson, N.F. Davin and J.D. Edgar (the Speaker of the House of Commons).
- 1899 Death of Lampman at age 37.